

Message Text

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62

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-02 COME-00 TRSE-00 MC-02 DODE-00 AGR-10

INT-05 DOTE-00 OMB-01 /062 W
----- 118582

R 191030Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WAHDC 1533

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONGEN MONTREAL

AMCONGEN CASABLANCA

UNCLAS PRETORIA 0968

HEREWITH REPEAT OF CAPE TOWN 0317 TO ALL ADDRESSEE. QUOTE

R 181500Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 5221

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0317

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS :EAIR,BEXP,SF

SUBJ :CIVAIR-AIRCRAFT EXPORT PROMOTION

REF :STATE 57389

1. S.A.FINANCIAL GAZETTE MARCH 14 REPORTED CANADIAN GOVT HAS
GIVEN GO-AHEAD FOR SALE OF THREE FIRE FIGHTING AIRCRAFT TO SOUTH
AFRICA AT PRICE OF ABOUT R1.5 MILLION EACH. PURCHASE TO BE
JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN DEPTS OF FORESTRY AND DEFENCE IF SAG
CONCURS,WITH SA AIR FORCE PROVIDING AIR CREWS.
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE'S TECHNICAL SERVICES ALSO REPORTED INTERESTED
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IF AIRCRAFT CAN BE FITTED WITH SPECIAL ATTACHMENTS TO FIGHT

LOCUST SWARMS.

2. AIRCRAFT CONCERNED ARE TWIN PISTON-ENGINED PLANES (CL-215 AMPHIBIAN) DESIGNED BY CANADAIR OF MONTREAL, AND ARE REPORTED CAPABLE OF SCOOPING UP 5,000 LITERS OF SEA OR FRESH WATER IN 9 SECONDS AND DROPPING FULL LOAD OF 45,000 LITERS ON FOREST FIRE IN EVEN LESS TIME. SAME AIRCRAFT DESCRIBED AS ALREADY BEING USED EFFECTIVELY AND EXTENSIVELY IN FIGHTING BUSH AND FOREST FIRES ON THE RIVIERA AND IN SOUTHERN SPAIN.

3. CANADIAN TRADE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE IN CAPE TOWN IS QUOTED AS SAYING 'ALTHOUGH CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS NOT TO SELL ARMS TO SOUTH AFRICA, THIS QTE BOMBER UNQTE IS REGARDED AS PROTECTOR OF ENVIROMENT AND WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THIS WILL BE ITS USE IF SOUTH AFRICA BUYS THE AIRCRAFT.'

4. BACKGROUND FOR PROPOSED SALE IS SUGGESTION MADE LAST YEAR IN CAPE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL THAT PROVINCIAL AUTHORITY ACQUIRE TWO SUCH AIRCRAFT TO FIGHT MOUNTAIN AND VELD FIRES WHICH CAUSE MILLIONS OF RANDS DAMAGE EACH SUMMER. PROPOSAL WAS REJECTED BY CAPE ADMINISTRATOR AS IMPRACTICAL AND TOO COSTLY. INTEREST APPARENTLY REVIVED LAST MONTH HOWEVER BY VISIT OF J. BISSON, SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADAIR, WHO FLEW FROM MONTREAL TO CAPE TOWN TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF AIRCRAFTS' OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES TO S.P.BOTHA, MINISTRY OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY. THE SECRETARY FOR FORESTRY, MR. D.P. ACKERMAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING 'SINCE THEN MEMBERS OF THE SAAF HAVE BOTH SEEN AND HANDLED THE CONTROLS OF THE CANADAIR. ALL THE REPORTS SEEM FAVORABLE AND IT IS NOW A QUESTION OF GETTING THE PRIORITIES RIGHT AS FAR AS BUDGETS ARE CONCERNED.'

5. IF NOT ALREADY REPORTED REQUEST EMBASSY REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO SECSTATE, OTHER SA POSTS, AND OTTAWA, MONTREAL AND CASABLANCA FOR RCAA, WITH NOTAL ON REFTTEL.

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